

REMARKS

Reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested. Claim 22 has been amended without adding new matter and to correct a typographical error. Claims 1-54 remain pending.

Claim Objections

Claim 22 has been objected to for depending from a higher-numbered claim. Applicant has amended claim 22 to depend from claim 21 instead of claim 23.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 29-35, 37-40 and 44-49 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,706,224 to Srinivasan et al. (“Srinivasan”). Applicant respectfully disagrees with this reason for rejection.

Claim 29 recites:

determining a first block priority number from a first plurality of priority numbers where each of the first plurality of priority numbers are associated with data stored in a first data classification block (DCB) that matches a search key;

determining a second block priority number from a second plurality of priority numbers where each of the second plurality of priority numbers are associated with data stored in a second data classification block (DCB) that matches the search key; and

determining a most significant block priority number (MSBPN) from the first block priority number and the second block priority number.

Srinivasan discloses a semiconductor memory device which is partitionable into RAM and CAM subfields and in which transfer gates are used to ensure that potential match signals originating from RAM subfields do not reach a priority encoder (Srinivasan, col. 2, lines 51-64; col. 5, lines 35-43). With regard to prioritizing between data that match a search criteria, Srinivasan discloses that “the highest priority matched data word is that word with the lowest physical address” (Srinivasan, col. 4, lines 29-42). Srinivasan does not disclose or suggest priority numbers that are associated with data stored in a data classification block, much less the above-recited limitations of determining first block priority number from a first plurality of priority numbers, determining a second block priority number from a second plurality of priority numbers and determining a most significant block priority number from the first block priority

number and the second block priority number.

In view of this clear distinction, it follows that Srinivasan does not disclose all the limitations of claim 29 and therefore does not anticipate claim 29. Because claims 30-35 and 37-40 depend from and further limit claim 29, claims 30-35 and 37-40 also are not anticipated by Srinivasan.

Claim 44 recites:

means for determining a first block priority number (BPN) associated with a first data stored in a first data classification block (DCB) that matches a search key;

means for determining a second BPN associated with a second data stored in a second data classification block (DCB) that matches the search key; and

means for determining a most significant block priority number (MSBPN) from the first BPN and the second BPN.

Applicant submits that, at least for the reasons given with respect to claim 29, Srinivasan does not disclose all the limitations of claim 44 and therefore does not anticipate claim 44. Because claims 45-49 depend from and further limit claim 44, claims 45-49 also are not anticipated by Srinivasan.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1-26, 28 and 50-54 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Srinivasan in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,914,956 to Williams (“Williams”).

Claim 1 recites a digital signal processor comprising:

a first data classification block (DCB) that outputs a first block priority number (BPN) associated with a first data stored in the first DCB that matches a search key;

a second DCB that outputs a second BPN associated with a second data stored in the second DCB that matches the search key; and

a device index processor that determines a most significant block priority number (MSBPN) from the first BPN and the second BPN.

As discussed above in reference to claim 29, Srinivasan does not disclose or suggest priority numbers that are associated with data stored in a data classification block. Accordingly,

applicant submits that Srinivasan does not disclose or suggest any of the above-recited limitations.

Williams discloses an ATM switch having a cell router that uses the header and input port identification information to determine a specific entry in a connection table (Williams, col. 3, lines 25-35; col. 5, lines 9-12). Although Williams discloses that the lookup function performed by the cell router may use a CAM (Williams, col. 5, lines 15-19), Williams does not disclose or suggest the above-recited combination of “a first data classification block (DCB) that outputs a first block priority number (BPN) associated with a first data stored in the first DCB that matches a search key” and “a second DCB that outputs a second BPN associated with a second data stored in the second DCB that matches the search key,” much less “a device index processor that determines a most significant block priority number (MSBPN) from the first BPN and the second BPN.

Accordingly, even if Srinivasan and Williams could be combined in the manner suggested in the Office Action, the combination would still not meet all the limitations of claim 1 and therefore would not have rendered claim 1 obvious. Because claims 2-26 and 28 depend from and further limit claim 1, claims 2-26 and 28 also would not have been obvious in view of the suggested combination.

Claim 50 recites, in part:

a device index processor coupled to the plurality of priority index tables, match flag signal generators, and row enable encoder circuits to determine the index for at least one of the data entries that matches a search key.

Applicant submits that neither Srinivasan nor Williams discloses a plurality of priority index tables, match flag signal generators or row enable encoder circuits, much less a device index processor coupled to the plurality of priority index tables, match flag signal generators, and row enable encoder circuits to determine the index for at least one of the data entries that matches a search key. Accordingly, even if Srinivasan and Williams could be combined in the manner suggested in the Office Action, the combination would still not meet all the limitations of claim 50 and therefore would not have rendered claim 50 obvious. Because claims 51-54 depend from and further limit claim 50, claims 51-54 also would not have been obvious in view of the suggested combination.

Claim 27 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over

Srinivasan in view of Williams and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,557,747 to Rogers et al. (“Rogers”). Applicant respectfully disagrees with this reason for rejection.

As discussed above, even if Srinivasan and Williams could be combined in the manner suggested in the Office Action, the combination would still fail to meet the following limitations of claim 1, each of which is incorporated into claim 27 by virtue of its dependency of claim 1:

a first data classification block (DCB) that outputs a first block priority number (BPN) associated with a first data stored in the first DCB that matches a search key;

a second DCB that outputs a second BPN associated with a second data stored in the second DCB that matches the search key; and

a device index processor that determines a most significant block priority number (MSBPN) from the first BPN and the second BPN.

Applicant submits that Rogers does not disclose any of the above limitations and accordingly that, even if Srinivasan, Williams and Rogers could be combined in the manner suggested in the Office Action, the combination would still fail to meet all the limitations of claim 27 and therefore would not have rendered claim 27 obvious.

Claims 36 and 41-43 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Srinivasan. Applicant respectfully disagrees with this reason for rejection.

Claims 36 and 41-43 depend from independent claim 29 which, as discussed above, includes at least the following limitations that are not disclosed or suggested by Srinivasan:

determining a first block priority number from a first plurality of priority numbers where each of the first plurality of priority numbers are associated with data stored in a first data classification block (DCB) that matches a search key;

determining a second block priority number from a second plurality of priority numbers where each of the second plurality of priority numbers are associated with data stored in a second data classification block (DCB) that matches the search key; and

determining a most significant block priority number (MSBPN) from the first block priority number and the second block priority number.

Accordingly, for at least the reasons given above with respect to claim 29, applicant submits that Srinivasan does not render claims 36 and 41-43 obvious.

Conclusion

Applicant submits that all pending claims are in condition for allowance. If a telephone interview would be helpful in any way, the examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney.

A Petition for a two (2) month extension of time is enclosed herewith.

Authorization is hereby given to charge deposit account 501914 for any fee deficiency associated with this Response.

Respectfully submitted,

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